

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 12-21 are pending in this application. Of these pending claims, Claims 1-8 and 12-21 stand rejected. The following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding office action, and are believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention, the Examiner stating there is insufficient antecedent basis for ‘this limitation in the claims where depend therefrom’. While the rejection is not understood as “this limitation” which is alleged to lack antecedent basis is not identified, the rejection is in any event traversed as the claims are believed to be definite and include appropriate antecedent basis for all material claim limitations. In particular, claim 2 introduces the feature of “a third digital scanning device” attached to said first scanning unit (antecedent basis in claim 1) or said second scanning unit (antecedent basis in claim 1) through a second tether interface, while claim 4 specifies wherein said third scanning device (antecedent basis in claim 2) comprises a digital camera for capturing digital photographs. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-8, 12-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Nakajima et al. ('841) reference in view of the Koyanagi et al. ('844) reference. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons set forth in Applicants response filed January 29, 2008, along with the following additional comments.

The rejection continues to represent clear error for the reasons set forth in the previous response. In particular, the Examiner fails to address Applicant’s explanation that neither of the applied references teaches the feature of a first tether interface which provides for power from said first scanning unit to said second scanning unit. Rather, the Examiner continues to misrepresent the

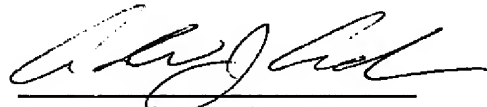
teachings of the applied references, by stating that Koyanagi teaches a tethered interface providing power from the a first scanning unit to a second scanning unit (referencing fig. 2 scanners 11 connected via interface 12). As previously explained, Koyanagi's "local area network 14" describes only a communication line between the facsimile machine (21) and information collecting units (12) connected to scanners (11). Examples of possible communication lines given by Koyanagi et al. at col. 5, lines 20-30 referenced by the Examiner are RS232C or RS422. As is well known to those skilled in the electronic communication arts, the RS232C or RS422 interfaces define data signal levels only. Neither RS232C or RS422 are capable of, nor intended for, providing operating power to a peripheral apparatus such as a scanner. The Examiner has failed to address such misrepresentation of the teachings of the applied Koyanagi reference, and the applied rejection accordingly represents clear error.

It is further noted that the Examiner has failed to address Applicants' argument that there in any event would be no motivation or suggestion to route a power connection in a tethered interface extending from one image reading unit to another of Nakajima as such reference is intentionally designed to employ wireless communication so that image reading units (100a, 100b, 100c) are independent of each other. This mutually independent and wireless arrangement is described by Nakajima et al. as advantageous because it overcomes the problem of waiting that can occur if these image reading units are wired together in the conventional manner of facsimile machines. Accordingly, in addition to not resulting in the claimed invention, replacing the wireless interface of Nakajima et al with the wired interface of Koyanagi would appear to go against the express teachings of Nakajima. This accordingly represents further clear error in the applied rejection.

In conclusion, the prior art cited by the Office Action clearly fails to disclose all of the required limitations of the claims of the present invention, either individually or in combination. A prima facie case of obviousness has accordingly clearly not been established, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully urged.

It is respectfully submitted that, in view of the above remarks, this application is now in condition for allowance, prompt notice of which is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned in the event that a phone interview will expedite prosecution of this application towards allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Anderson', written over a horizontal line.

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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.